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#### BEHEMOTH

- Loch Ness: \* The was a German radio broadcast on Nessie on station Bayern 2, on 3 August 1998. I haven't been able to listen to it, but a small article is in the Süddeutsche Zeitung 3 August 1998, p. 16 \* Tammy van Wisse, a 30 year old Australian swimmer, plans to swim all the length of Loch Ness at the end of August. She had always been fascinated by the myth of the monster. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 4 August 1998, p. 9; taz 4 August 1998, p. 16) \* Loren Coleman on the Loch Ness Monster: Fortean Times 112, p. 48
- Loch Ness, sightings: \* Father Andrew Mac Killop, who has been living at Loch Ness for 78 years: "But the extraordinary thing is that there was no suspicion of it [the Loch Ness monster] when I was a small boy until lots of people started seeing it in the early 1930s." Mac Killop never saw the monster, but he believes it exists. Again we have evidence here that there was no monster tradition at Loch Ness. This was first invented in the 1950s by C. Whyte and has been gullibly believed by each and every author thereafter. (Inverness Courier 20 March 1998) \* 1970s: Ian Cameron was fishing with a friend when "a great elephant-like shape rose from the water". They watched it for 50 minutes! (Nessletter 133. Write to: Rip Hepple, 7 Huntshieldford, St John's Chapel, Weardale, Co Durham, DL13 1 RQ, UK) \* August 1997: Gary Campbell, the man who thought he was the first to invent a club for Nessie fans, sees Nessie (for the second time...) (Inverness Courier 2 June 1998) \* 24 October 1997: Martin Wragg sees, from the jetty at Fort Augustus abbey, "a dark animated hump-like object" which quickly sank, but not before he'd taken several snaps with his camera. Both Andreas Trottmann and Rip Hepple examined prints and concluded that they showed only a wave, probably a boat wake or turbulence caused by the river mouth. (Nessletter 133) \* March 1998: a seal was spotted at Fort Augustus, and Fred Kelly, clerk to the Ness District Fishery Board, thought that "unusual" - he had never heard of such before! (Inverness Courier 17 March 1998) There were several sightings of seals at Fort Augustus in 1933 and 1934, and in 1985, one was even seen in River Oich. I should like to come across an expert on Loch Ness who knows what he is talking about! \* 18 April 1998: According to the "Weekly World News", diver Gary Boewman was attacked and killed by the Loch Ness monster (Inverness Courier 12 May 1998). Everybody knows the WWN makes up all the "news" it prints. \* 30 May 1998: a woman from Wiltshire sees, at Urquhart Castle, at 8:55 am, a "large black object rising about 10 feet out of the water". (Inverness Courier 2 June 1998) This is similar to my "Nessie-sighting" of August 1981 when I saw a large black object rise about 10 ft out of the water off Altsight. I now believe that it was a salmon jumping. (All Inverness Courier stories from Andreas Trottmann's Loch Ness Newsclipping Service vol.4, nr.2. Address: Les Pretresses, 1586 Vallamand VD, Switzerland)
- Storsjo: An international team of monster hunters, including Loch Ness veteran Adrian Shine, were at Storsjo on August 15, 1998, to search for the great orm. As the International Herald Tribune, 17 August 1998, p. 5, reports, the "Great Lake" has had monster stories for 360 years - "a horse-like or snake-like creature" (it is only the head that has been compared, as Skandinavian tradition demands, with that of a horse). The hunt, which is the largest research effort at the lake so far, featured 15 vessels and six divers, they use sonar and an underwater video cameras. Spokesman of the project is Anders Brattga. News on other expeditions, to Norway and Africa, can be found in Fortean Times 114.
- Bibliography: \* giant turtle Vietnam (Fortean Times 113, p. 18) \* lake monsters Mongolia (Fortean Times 113, p. 19) \* lake monsters as basilosaurs

and plesiosaurs (Fortean Times 113, p. 43) \* arguments in favour of giant anacondas (Fortean Times 112, p. 51) \* dimetrodon seen in Africa (Strange 19, p. 22) \* Lake Manitoba monster: Strange 19, p. 22 \* Several sightings of out-of-place reptiles in lakes were in the papers recently. In June, snapping turtles were reported in gravel pits near Chemnitz, Saxony, and Erbach, Hesse, Germany. The Saxon turtle was clearly an escapee that had been reported missing by the owner. (taz 29 June 1998, p. 20; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2 July 1998, p. 10; taz 2 July 1998, p. 20) \* Then it was reported in the Saudi Arabian newspaper El Bilad (and in the taz, 13 July 1998, p. 20) that freshwater crocodiles had been seen in Lake El Araba'in, a salt water lake near Djeddah. The crocs are between 2ft and 2.5m in length and are presumably Nile crocodiles. Earlier, visitors have also spotted dolphins in the lake. It is a complete mystery how the creatures got into the landlocked lake. Are these the first hints of an Arabian monster lake? \* An escaped alligator has spoiled bathing fun for tourists in Lake Accesa near Massa Marittima in Tuscany, Italy. A German visitor reported police how he saw an alligator escape from a couple who walked him on a leash along the shore. After searching for the gator - without result - the couple allegedly fled. Police searched in vain for the animal, but bathing is now prohibited in the lake. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 14 August 1998, p.12)

#### ISIS

- Bibliography: Turkish crocodile boy: Fortean Times 112, p. 19
- Underwater man: 24-year-old Federico Gei appeared to drown in the cold waters of Lake Iseo, Italy, and was only recovered 30 minutes later by divers. He was thought to be dead, but suddenly started moving again. Gei is alive again, although still in a coma in the hospital. (Bild 28 July 1998, p. 10) I had a similar item in Bilk some years ago, does it mean that some people are actually able to survive without air underwater for 30 minutes?

#### LEVIATHAN

- Greatstone, Kent, England: Two boys, Peter Jennings and Neil Savage, discovered the body of a dead sea serpent on 14 April 1998. As the picture in Fortean Times 114, p. 19, and the accompanying comments by Karl Shuker make clear, this was just another rotting basking shark.
- Bibliography: \* on globsters: Strange 19, p. 54 \* The German news magazine Der Spiegel had a cover story on sea monsters in the July 27, 1998 issue, but it only mentions, in a few lines, giant squid.

#### KRAKEN

- A National Geographic documentary shown on 19 July 1998 on German TV channel ZDF dealt with giant squids and Clyde Roper's and Frederick Aldrich's attempts to catch or observe them near Tasmania and Monterey.
- Bibliography: \* giant jellyfish: Fortean Times 112, p. 16 \* extraterrestrial giant octopus in Pacific: Fortean Times 113, p. 47 \* a new B-movie "Octalus" was screened in German movie theatres in May. Director Stephen Sommer shows how a multi-mouthed monster octopus plays havoc on a ship. (Wochenblatt, Karlsruhe, 27 May 1998)

#### USO

- South Korea: A mysterious submarine was caught on 22 June 1998 by a South Korean trawler in its net off Sokcho at the east coast of the country. At first the origin of the sub was unclear, but it soon was shown that it was a North Korean spy vessel. This caused a major international crisis. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 23 June 1998, p. 10; 26 June 1998, p. 9; 1 July 1998, p. 9; 3 July 1998, p. 7; 13 July 1998, p. 8; taz 23 June 1998, p. 11; 24 June 1998, p. 11; 27 June 1998, p. 5; 29 June 1998, p. 10; 3 July 1998, p. 11)
- Sweden: Finally, a sunken Soviet submarine has been located in 40 m of water off the Swedish coast. But wait - it is from 1941, when it was sunk by a Finnish torpedo. (Bild 1 August 1998, p. 1; Badische Neueste Nachrichten 1

August 1998)

- Cornwall: Cornish fisherman John Leach has caught a 4m miniature submarine that the Royal Navy had been missing for 4 months. Because he doesn't receive a reward, Leach has secured the sub and hides it. (Bild, 31 July 1998, p. 10)
- England: A large glowing, z-shaped object in the sky was observed in July above the sea in England. It was the trail of a meteor. (Bild, 13 July 1998, p. 12)

#### ARCHAEOLOGY

- Vineta: The Baltic has its own Atlantis, the fabled city of Vineta, which was called Jomsburg by the Vikings. Now Berlin historian Günter Wermusch claims to have found Vineta (which has already been excavated by Polish archaeologists on Wollin Island in the 1970s) in the mud of the Barther Bodden, an arm of the sea on the German Baltic coast. Wermusch plans to find the remains of the gigantic mediaeval metropolis (it was populated by Vikings, Germans, Slavs, Arabs and Russians) by using sonar. (taz, 16 June 1998, p. 16)
- Japan: A fortune teller must never rely on newspaper articles and stuff from the tabloid fortune teller press, and yet I did. So my heartfelt apologies to Robert Schoch whom I claimed in Bilk 84 to have validated the 10 000 years BC date for the Yonaguni submarine ruins off Japan even before he saw them. He now has a long report in Fortune Times 114 that concludes that the "pyramids" may well have been the result of natural erosion. Whether he ever made the outlandish claim I quoted in Bilk 84 I do not know, but it appears he does investigate and change his mind in face of evidence. So my calling him kook was unfair. A story about the submarine pyramid appeared in the German fashion magazine "Max", July 1998, p. 30!

#### CRYPTOZOLOGY

- Out-of-place: This was the summer of 'roos. In June, Tokyo policemen found a wallaby with a 50cm tail which had escaped from the house of its Australian owner. (taz, 26 June 1998, p. 20) In Germany, Manni, a 3-year-old 'roo, helped fill the silly season gap when it escaped from a Bad Pyrmont animal park on August 11, 1998. The roo was seen on August 12 20 km southwest of Hameln (Hamelin) in Aerzen, but it quickly vanished into the undergrowth. As soon as news of Manni's escape spread, people reported roo-sightings from all over northern Germany. The animal park's director, Gerhard Grüne, said he'd received reports from as far as Schwerin (which is several hundred kilometres away). "Either these are hoaxes, or they can't tell a rabbit from a kangaroo", Grüne said. (taz 13 August 1998, p. 16 and 14 August 1998, p. 16; Süddeutsche Zeitung, 14 August 1998, p. 12) Additional sightings were reported from Minden in Westphalia, again far from Bad Pyrmont. However, in the morning of August 13, it was observed near Groß-Berkel in Lower Saxony, but police were only informed four hours later and were unable to trace the escapee. This sighting was only three kilometres from where the 'roo had escaped, so we can easily discount all additional reports. (taz 15 August 1998, p. 20) This is a typical fortune teller pattern: whenever police confirm a phenomenon (escaped croc, roo, pumas or "officially logged" UFO sightings), people will start to see the things, even if it later is definitely shown that the escapee was nowhere near the site of the sighting. Something similar happened at Loch Ness in 1933, when newspaper stories about isolated and unrelated observations of "something in the water" were moulded into the form of a sea serpent tale and people were encouraged to see Nessie themselves.
- The onza: I've said repeatedly in several articles as well as in Bilk (f.e., in Bilk 78) that cryptozoologists looking for the onza ("an unidentified felid") are anglocentric fools: onza is simply the Spanish word for puma, onca the Portuguese one. But of course cryptozoologists like to learn it the hard way - so I found it funny indeed to learn from Karl Shuker in Fortune Times 114, p. 18, that an article in Cryptozoology reveals that, sadly, after 10

years of investigation, the onza shot in Mexico in 1986 proves to be ... only a puma! Shuker concludes that "of course, this does not mean that all onzas are pumas" - but well, no, actually, it does. A Mexican who wants to say he saw a puma will tell you he saw an onza - there is no other word for it in Spanish. Should Mexicans learn English to avoid cryptozoologists from making stupid claims? Remember the onza is still being presented as "one of the breakthroughs of cryptozoology". A cynic like me may point out that all "successes" of cryptozoology so far have turned out to be lies, hoaxes or the false judgement of researchers too incompetent to recognize a well known animal for what it is (the onza, the Kellas cat, the ri, the Minnesota iceman, the Florida octopus, etc.), but what is a cynic like me against the mighty academic power of the people who write for Cryptozoology and discover great unknowns!

#### MARINE LIFE

- French dolphins: I have reported about the strandings of dolphins at the French Mediterranean coast and the theory that their death was the result of secret navy testing, as they all had similar circular holes in their heads. Francois de Sarre has sent me a number of clippings on this case (f.e., La Depeche du Midi, Toulouse, 5 February 1998, p. 16; Lumières dans la Nuit, March 1998, p. 44) My initial scepticism that no dark conspiracy was behind these mutilations was confirmed by Francois de Sarre in his letter of July 27, 1998. All mutilated dolphins were of the species *Stenella coeruleoalba*, a pelagic species and therefore unlikely to have been used by the US military for experiments. De Sarre, an ichthyologist, thinks that *Isistius brasiliensis*, a small shark, has caused these wounds. De Sarre's hypothesis is very interesting, and I regret that I can't give you all two pages of detailed information and sources. I hope he does a piece for the INFO Journal, so that we can all profit from his investigation. He also included a detailed article on the case from Le Courrier de la Nature, May/June 1998, p. 8. De Sarre also publishes the interesting journal "Bipedia" with a wide mix of topics, some far off, others more convincing, on alternative scenarios of the evolution of mankind, which you should subscribe to. (CERBI - 32, Avenue de Buenos-Ayres - 06000 Nice - France)

- Sharks: \* When a shark attacked Swiss Clark Thomas' (47) son Mark at a South African beach, Clark grabbed the 1.3m animal and dragged it ashore, according to the newspaper "Beeld". (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 8 July 1998, p. 10) \* "Giant shark off Mallorca" blared the German tabloid "Bild" on July 27, 1998, p. 6. Off the NW coast of the Catalan island, close to Formentor, the trawler Landarina caught a 500 kg, 3.2m/11ft grey shark in its net.

#### DINOSAURS

- Fossil dinosaur dung found in southern Canada may be that of *Tyrannosaurus rex*, reported Karen Chin of the United States Geological Survey of Menlo Park, California, in an article in "Nature". The problem is the *Tyrannosaurus* swallowed whole bits of animals, with his sharp teeth he couldn't chew. The scientist assumes that dinosaurs swallowed stones, like birds and crocodiles, to help them digest. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 18 June 1998, p. 13) ● A Chinese-American group of researchers confirmed that dinosaurs are the ancestors of birds with a paper in "Nature". Two dinosaur fossils from Sihetun, China, called *Protoarchaeopteryx* and *Caudipteryx* had feathers according to Mark Norell and Li Qiang. They lived 145 million years ago. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 25 June 1998, p. 11) ● Already in March, ("Nature", vol. 392, p. 275) US scientists had noted that crow-sized dinosaurs from Madagascar and the Gobi Desert had features of both reptile and bird. The turtle-sized *Shuvuuia deserti* was closer to modern birds than *archaeopteryx*, the researchers noted. (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 19 March 1998, p. 14)